

**MAYOR OFFERS TIPS TO PREVENT SEWAGE BACKUP**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

PIERRE – Mayor Laurie Gill is urging residents near the flood zone to take several precautions to avoid sewer backups. The first reports of sewer backups were reported Thursday and Gill said anyone experiencing utility problems should contact City Hall at 773-7407 during normal working hours; and 773-7410 during the evening.

Gill said installing basement floor drains and sealing basement fixtures including sinks and toilets may prevent a serious mess. As ground water rises, it creates pressure which causes water to infiltrate the sewer system. This can force raw sewage and water up through a home's pipes. Although this condition is more likely within the flood zone, it may occur anywhere the water table is rapidly rising.

To prevent sewage back-up, Gill said residents should plug their basement floor drain. Basement toilets, sinks and washers should also be sealed at their drain point. Rubberized drain seals are available at most hardware stores.

In addition to sealing their drains, simple tips for alleviating pressure on the water system will help prevent sewage backups. They include:

- Disconnect your water softener (this is very important).
- Flushing toilets only when necessary.
- Taking sponge baths instead of baths and showers.
- Use towelettes to clean your hands unless they are very dirty.
- Use disposable cups and utensils to avoid excessive dishwashing.
- Avoid watering your lawn.
- Avoid washing your vehicles in the driveway.

"The best way to prevent backup is to relieve pressure on the system," Gill said. "This can be achieved by following these simple tips."